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Church in Wales

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NOTES ON THE CHURCH IN WALES

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NOTES ON THE CHURCH IN WALES

BY

THE VEN. W. L. BEVAN

ARCHDEACON OF BRECON

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PREFACE

The following 'Notes' are intended to call attention to certain statements made by Liberationist speakers in advocating the Disestablishment of the Church in Wales. The statements in question refer for the most part to historical and statistical points which cannot be fairly discussed within the limits of a Parliamentary debate. Hence they pass unchallenged, to the prejudice of the Church with the general public, who are apt to believe accusations confidently made and not rebutted. Subsequent criticism can do but little to rectify the injury done; but it is the only resource open to the supporters of the Church, and it is with this object that the present writer ventures to comment on some of the charges that have been brought against the Church in Wales.

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NOTES ON THE CHURCH IN WALES

I

PAST AND PRESENT OF THE CHURCH IN WALES

Liberationist denial of Church progress—Appeal to communicant statistics—Objection to them as a basis of legislation—Communicants in Welsh dioceses as showing progress—Comparison with English dioceses—Reasons for declining comparison with Nonconformist statistics—Wide divergence in number of Nonconformist communicants in different parts of Wales—Church equipment in churches and clergy in the early part of nineteenth century and at present time—Advancement in the several dioceses: St. Davids, Llandaff, St. Asaph, and Bangor.

THE opponents of the Established Church in Wales are fond of asserting that in spite of the efforts made of late years to bring the Church up to a proper standard of efficiency, little or no result has followed in the number of its

adherents or the growth of its influence. This (it will be remembered) was the ground taken up by Mr. Asquith in the last Parliamentary debate on the Disestablishment of the Welsh Church, Feb. 4, 1902. He frankly acknowledged the "zeal, unselfishness, and devotion" which had been shown by Churchmen in the last two generations; but he went on to say that "no one will deny that the Church does not make an appeal either to the religious or to the national sentiments of the people," and he seemed to think that the efforts, and the measure of success which attended them, were well-nigh confined to "the great towns and centres of urban population where there are no endowments." We feel some difficulty in understanding the allusion to *endowments*. Does Mr. Asquith suppose that no endowments have been found for new churches in populous or remote places? But whether this be so or not, the gist of the remark was to imply that comparatively nothing had been done in places where there are endowments, meaning the greater part of Wales. To this we decidedly demur. The restoration of churches, the erection of parsonages, and the increase of ministrations — these tokens of vigorous life are to be seen in remote and thinly-occupied country parishes just as much as in the towns and mining districts.

In support of his view, as to the Church's failure, Mr. Asquith quoted the number of the communicants in the Church and Nonconformity, namely, 130,000 and 460,000 respectively, yielding, as he remarked, a proportion of something like three or four to one. Now, before discussing these numbers, we desire to notice two considerations that in our opinion detract materially from the value of the communicant test of numerical strength—one being the difficulty of procuring reliable returns, and the other the difficulty of calculating the number of adherents represented by the communicants.

Mr. Asquith furnishes an illustration of the former of these two points, for he evidently casts doubt on the accuracy of the 130,000:—"I dare say it may be an over-statement, but I am putting it at the very highest." If so, it was unfit to be introduced into his argument, for figures quoted for penal legislation ought to be based on indisputable authority; and his doubt stands in odd contrast to the unhesitating confidence which he accords to the abnormal return of Nonconformity. Whether this return be accurate, we presume not to say; but his quotation of 130,000 as the number for the Church in 1902 was undoubtedly inaccurate, if the *Official Year-Book* is to be believed.

The second point is of great importance.

The total strength of a religious body consists in the number of its *adherents*—including under that term non-communicant attendants, and children. But there may be very great variations in the proportion which the adherents bear to the communicants; and in testing the accuracy of the factor which is to convert from the one class into the other, regard must be had to the various elements which go to make up the population.

For the above reasons we do not place the confidence in communicant statistics that Mr. Asquith does: we regard them as mere *ex parte* statements, very serviceable for the use of the bodies to which they belong; but, so long as they are unverified by official authority, inadmissible as evidence for the purposes of State legislation. On this understanding we should be perfectly ready to institute a comparison between the communicants of the Welsh Church at different periods, or between the Welsh and English sections of the Church at the same period: the former would decide the question of progress or no progress; the latter would furnish a standard of comparative efficiency or non-efficiency. The returns of the Welsh dioceses for the last four years, commencing with the one ending Easter 1900, make up the following totals:—137,011, 141,008, 144,319, and 151,794—a rate of increase

which furnishes satisfactory evidence of progress. And as regards the comparison with English dioceses, we find that on the whole the Welsh dioceses exhibit a higher percentage than the English, in the proportion of 7 to 6; that while St. Asaph and St. Davids fall below the strongest of the English agricultural dioceses, such as Bath and Wells, Salisbury, and Hereford, they nevertheless hold a respectable place in the general scale; and that Llandaff with its overpowering mining population stands above the corresponding dioceses of Durham and Newcastle.

With these few facts, we leave it to the judgment of our readers whether the Church in Wales holds so low a place as Liberationists assign to it. We do not indeed desire to press the argument from the number of communicants, so as to imply that the Welsh section stands on a par with the English in total strength—far otherwise; but we think that the comparison furnishes a wholesome corrective of the conclusion which Mr. Asquith has drawn from the comparison with the Nonconformist returns.

If we decline to be bound by his conclusion, it is on the ground that the information as to those returns is insufficient, and, as far as it goes, implies a state of things which lies outside the

range of our experience. In order to justify this opinion we may state that we have examined the returns of the four leading denominations, viz. the Calvinistic Methodists, Congregationalists, Baptists, and Wesleyans, for the year 1902 (the year of Mr. Asquith's statement), and that we find a very wide divergence between the number of communicants, as compared with the population, in the western and in the eastern counties. In the former, comprising six counties, including Carmarthenshire, and containing about one-fourth of the population of the Welsh counties, the percentage stands at about 36; but in the eastern division, including Monmouthshire, and containing three-fourths of the population, the percentage is only 16. If then the adherents bear the same proportion to the communicants in these two divisions, it follows that Dissenters are more than twice as numerous in the western counties as in the eastern, and that it is an entire mistake to regard the 460,000 of Mr. Asquith's statement as representing the position of Nonconformity in the bulk of Wales; it certainly does not hold good of three-fourths of the country.

Turning to the western counties, we find that in two of them the percentage far exceeds 36, rising above 43 in Merioneth, and approximating to 44 in Cardigan. We might reason-

ably ask that the statisticians engaged in preparing these returns should furnish us with approximate estimates of the other elements that contribute to make up the population, namely, the minor Nonconformist bodies, Church people, Romanists, non-communicant adults, children, and non-religious. The last of these items holds a prominent place in Nonconformist estimates, rising sometimes to half-a-million for the whole of Wales; it is found very useful in deciding the number of adherents to be allowed to the Church, which is frequently represented by the *residuum* left after deducting every other element, particularly the non-religious, from the total population.

Whether similar percentages are to be found in other parts of the world we are not aware. We do not find them among Nonconformists in England: the Congregationalists and Baptists have their co-religionists on both sides of the border, but their contributions to the membership of their joint body are in striking contrast to the populations, the Welsh out of two millions yielding half the number that the English do out of more than thirty millions. Or we might suggest the inquiry whether in any part of England the total number of communicants, Church and Chapel alike, equals what is reported of the two Welsh counties we have specified—

whether, for instance, in a large group of parishes averaging a population of 1,000 there are to be found, as a rule, 430 communicants or even more. We trust that these remarks will not appear to be either captious or irrelevant. These statistics form one of the leading charges in the attack on the Church: we have a right therefore to look for some explanation of the widely-divergent conclusions to be drawn from the above comparisons.

Having thus, as we trust, cleared the way for a fair appreciation of the efforts made by the Church to discharge its responsibilities, we pass on to offer a slight sketch of what has been done in this direction since the revival of Church life, aided by the reforms, financial and administrative, introduced by the Ecclesiastical Commissioners subsequently to 1831. Down to that time there had been a lamentable insufficiency of equipment both in churches and clergy, but more particularly in the latter. This arose primarily out of an insufficiency of income. It can be no matter of surprise that, as compared with its area, Wales falls far short of England in the production of tithe: this would follow from the natural character of the country, which contains so much larger a proportion of uncultivable and consequently untitheable land. But a further cause of depreciation lay in the

fact that the alienations of tithe to monastic houses, ecclesiastical dignitaries, and educational establishments, were heavier in Wales than in England in the proportion of three-fifths to two-fifths, involving an extra loss to Wales of £30,000 a year, a considerable amount of which went to enrich the English dioceses. The effect of these two conditions on Wales as compared with England was, that having about one-seventh of the area it has only one-seventeenth of tithe rent charge as commuted payable to parochial incumbents—which means either that the Welsh parishes are twice as large, or Welsh incomes half as large as in England. True that the population of England has always been largely in excess of that of Wales, and on this score the two divisions would be on an equality; but Wales would still be left under the disadvantage of excessive area. Welsh incumbents received under the Commutation Act very little more than half the total tithe rent charge raised in their dioceses, and the net income derived from all sources in 1831 averaged per benefice £137 for St. Davids, £177 for Llandaff, £252 for Bangor, and £271 for St. Asaph. The general average value of benefices throughout England and Wales at this time was £285; and when the excessive area of Welsh parishes is taken into consideration, and the further disadvantage

of the duplicate language in many parts of Wales, which can be fully met only by a duplication of churches and clergy—may it not be fairly estimated that the resources of the Welsh Church for its work were not more than half of those which the English dioceses had?

The insufficiency of the equipment of the Welsh dioceses might be illustrated by comparisons with some of the English dioceses or districts which had the same approximate area and population in 1851. Thus the county of Lincoln approximated to North Wales in both these respects; but the former had 657 places of worship and the latter only 364. The diocese of Bath and Wells with 462 benefices had about the same area as St. Asaph with 169. Bath and Wells had about the same population as St. Davids, but their respective incomes were £109,400 and £56,310. Such comparisons might be multiplied.

From these general remarks on the financial condition of the Welsh Church, we pass on to give a few particulars as to the several dioceses, describing the equipment before the dawn of the Revival and at the present time. We begin with *St. Davids*, which was suffering from the effects of the deep impoverishment that had brooded over it for more than a century. "Not half-a-dozen livings," says Dr. Erasmus Saunders, writing in 1721, "were worth £100 nor perhaps

10 above £80. Two hundred livings were excused paying tenths to Queen Anne's Bounty as being under £50, and 110 of these averaged only about £6, while curates had to serve three or four churches in order to win £10 or £12 a year." We hear of 32 churches with stipends not exceeding £2, and some as having *nil*. Queen Anne's Bounty came to the rescue about the middle of the century, and had effected a decided improvement by 1831 ; but there were still 160 livings of less value than £100 a year. The consequence was a large amount of plurality, non-residence, and general disorganization. As far as we have been able to calculate, there were only 262 incumbents for 394 benefices, containing 485 churches ; and of those incumbents about 70 seem to have been either total absentees or inactive. Assistant curates numbered 20, and very many churches were served by curates in sole charge, of whose number we have no information. Sunday services were scanty, though probably more numerous than when Bishop Burgess, in 1803, reported that he could only find 33 churches that had a double service. The buildings were in a scandalous state of disrepair, and in many places wholly inadequate in point of accommodation, the population having largely increased during the first half of the century in the

mineral districts, and their seaports, Swansea and Llanelly.

Such being the unsatisfactory state of the diocese in 1831, we are able to report that the churches have been generally restored, and in a style that would do credit to any diocese. The Church Building Society records grants made to 313 churches, affording 52,341 additional sittings, exclusive of 40 mission buildings, and there were others which were not aided by that Society. The total number of buildings consecrated or licensed for Divine service is now 678. Thirty-four new parishes have been formed, eight in Swansea, four in Llanelly, and the remainder in various parts of the diocese, where several old chapelries in large ancient parishes have been elevated into independent benefices. But the most signal improvement, and that which gives value to the other improvements, is to be found in the increased staff of clergy, which now consists of 365 incumbents and 148 assistant curates. This number permits of a largely increased number of Sunday services—which forms the very best test of efficiency. The incomes of the benefices have on the average advanced to £171 a year; but in 1901 there were still 121 benefices with incomes averaging only £117.

We pass on to the diocese of *Llandaff*, the special feature of which is the enormous growth

of population in a region where Church provision was at a minimum. We refer, of course, to the South Wales Coalfield—a high mountain district, which offers little scope for agricultural settlement, and was consequently thinly occupied before the discovery of iron ore and coal there about the middle of the eighteenth century. It may give some idea of this growth if we say that Glamorganshire, four-fifths of whose population live within this diocese, has advanced from 71,000 in 1801 to 860,000 in 1901—a twelve-fold increase; and that a similar rate of increase has occurred in that part of Monmouthshire which lies within the Coalfield. The bulk of the mining population is contained in nine ancient parishes, which in 1801 had an aggregate population of about 17,000, and in 1901 one of 334,600, or nearly twenty-fold increase. The area of these parishes was excessive, averaging 16,000 acres, the greater part of it bare mountain top. In 1831, when the population was already mounting up through the establishment of iron-works, no attempt had been made to subdivide these large parishes, and only one additional church had been built. Several of the old churches were small, badly situated, and poorly endowed. Three of them were originally chapels-of-ease to a distant mother-church, whose aggregate incomes in

1831 amounted to only £290, the rectorial tithes of the original parish having been appropriated by the Normans to the Abbey of St. Peter at Gloucester.

Such being the state of the district, we have to report in the way of progress that the same area has been now broken up into 43 parishes, having, as far as we can estimate, 144 churches, chapels, and mission-rooms, served by 134 clergy. The seaports dependent on the Coalfield exhibit a similar growth of population. Cardiff and Roath had in 1801 a joint population of about 2,100, with two churches and the same number of clergy: the County Borough of Cardiff now has a population of 164,420, divided into nine ecclesiastical parishes, with 32 places of worship and 48 clergymen. Newport (the County Borough) now has a population of 67,270 with six parishes, 13 places of worship and a like number of clergy, as compared with a population of 1,423 in 1801, with a single church and a single clergyman. The total number of new parishes in and connected with the Coalfield is 56, many of which contain more than a single church. The additional accommodation provided in these and other churches since 1850 exceeds 98,000 sittings.

The rural districts either in Glamorganshire or Monmouthshire have undergone little change.

Parishes are there of moderate size, churches proportionately numerous, and clergy fairly sufficient, though there was a considerable amount of absenteeism in 1831. The incumbents for the whole diocese at that time numbered 145 for 192 benefices, and there were 16 assistant curates; there were therefore 47 cases of plurality, and, as far as we can ascertain, the *acting* incumbents were reduced to nearly 90. The incumbents now number about 246 and the assistant curates 237—a notable increase, yet not sufficient to cope with the increasing population of the diocese, which amounts to above a million souls. The average net income of the benefices is now £194.

It is somewhat difficult to establish an exact comparison between the positions of *St. Asaph* diocese in 1831 and in 1901, inasmuch as considerable alterations were effected in its area subsequently to the former date, with the result that it gained about 20 benefices from neighbouring dioceses. In 1851 it had 151 ancient benefices, exclusive of 12 sinecures which have been since happily abolished, to the removal of a grievous scandal. The provision of churches and clergy was exceedingly scanty, and we find that no less than 18 new parishes were formed in the first twenty years; yet, even then, the number was wholly disproportioned to the area

and the population, the average giving 1,400 persons on 6,000 acres to each benefice, and the benefices seldom containing more than a single church, there not being so large a number of consolidations or chapels-of-ease as in the South Wales dioceses. Since 1851 a further addition of 40 new parishes has been effected ; chapels-of-ease have been built in the larger towns, and 20 mission buildings in various quarters ; 24,000 additional sittings have been obtained since 1851. The clergy now number 207 incumbents and 95 assistant curates, the number in 1831 having been (as far as we can ascertain) 116 incumbents and 10 assistant curates. The income per benefice was in 1831 considerably higher in St. Asaph than in the South Wales dioceses, partly because the land was more productive and partly because the recipients were fewer; but the effect of the increased number of the clergy and of the diminished value of the tithe rent charge has been to reduce the average from £271 to £224, and a considerable number of the benefices fall below £200 in value.

The diocese of *Bangor* has in times past laboured under a deficiency in the number of its clergy as compared with its churches. This was particularly the case as regards Anglesey, where in 1831 there were 78 churches or civil

parishes in 41 benefices, giving the impression of a large amount of plurality, though the dependent churches were for the most part old chapels-of-ease. In the other parts of the diocese there were 27 dependent churches in 86 benefices. The staff of clergy in 1831 consisted of 99 acting incumbents and 16 assistant curates. As the population has been but slowly progressive, Carnarvonshire with its slate quarries being the only county that has exhibited much elasticity, there has not been the same occasion to provide additional churches as in the other dioceses. Nevertheless, much has been done for the increase of church accommodation: 17 entirely new parishes have been formed; three of the old chapelries in Anglesey have been elevated to independent positions; 13 mission churches erected; an increase of 23,000 sittings obtained through the erection of new churches and the restoration of old ones. The benefices now number 143, and as the incumbents equal that amount, aided by about 70 assistant curates, there is reason to believe that the ministrations offered to the people are adequate. The average net income per benefice has dropped from £252 in 1831 to £188.

Such then is a very imperfect summary of the work achieved by the Welsh Church for the

better discharge of its duties to its people. It would be interesting to know what the buildings have cost in the way of voluntary contributions; but the returns are incomplete, and we can only surmise that the sum total would not fall short of £3,000,000. This is exclusive, of course, of the sums contributed for endowments by the Ecclesiastical Commissioners, with regard to which it is occasionally suggested that the Welsh Church is wholly enriched at the expense of the English, forgetting the large sums that have come to hand from former appropriations within the Welsh dioceses. But from whatever source the funds have come, there can be no doubt that they are usefully and economically applied. The largely increased number of the clergy favours, to our thinking, two conclusions: one being that there has been in the past a great insufficiency of them, and that to this may be attributed in great measure the depression from which the Church suffered; and the other, that there is good ground for believing in the substantial advance in the strength of the Church as shown in the communicant returns already quoted. The clergy are fully employed, and the fact that they are so furnishes the best argument in favour of the continuance of the Established Church in Wales.

The facts which we have mentioned show that the Church retains the character accorded to it some years past by the late Mr. Gladstone as "an advancing Church, an active Church, a living Church, and a rising Church."

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II

THE UNION OF THE CHURCHES OF ENGLAND AND WALES

The Welsh Church at the time of the Norman Conquest —Its union with the Church of England the result of the civil subjection of the country—Nomination of bishops a token of sovereignty in those days—Exercise of the right by the Conqueror in the Anglo-Saxon Church—The Welsh no worse treated than the English —No archbishops in the Welsh Church, and thus no single national organized Church—The Welsh dioceses independent of each other—Natural character of the country unfavourable to unification—Archbishops of Canterbury acting in Wales before the Norman Conquest—Signs of friendly approximation between the Churches—Attempts of Bishop Bernard and Giraldus Cambrensis to establish a metropolitan see at St. Davids.

COMMENTING on the stagnant condition, as he deemed it, of the Church in Wales, Mr. Asquith attributed its condition to its connection with the Church of England from the time of the Norman Conquest to the present day. Having referred to the previous existence of the Church as a

portion of the old British Church, he proceeded to describe "one of the most remarkable and regrettable facts in our history," namely, that "the Church, which in its origin was a native Church, and by its history a national Church, was denaturalized and denationalized by a superior power: it was conquered and annexed by the Church of England." It will be observed that the incorporation of the Church in Wales into the Church of England is here represented as the result of a contest between the two Churches—a purely *ecclesiastical* war. But surely this was not the case. It was rather the result of the *civil* conflict between the two countries. The country and people of Wales were "denaturalized and denationalized," and as a necessary consequence the Church shared the same fortune: it could not be otherwise, inasmuch as the Church and the State in those days were but divers aspects of one and the same body. Ecclesiastical subjection followed as a matter of course on civil subjection: the Church was one of the assets of the conquered nation.

The token of ecclesiastical supremacy consisted in the nomination of bishops. There was more reason perhaps in those days than in these for the retention of that right; for bishops were frequently appointed to high offices of State.

The Norman conqueror of England exercised this right to the full. Within four years of the battle of Senlac he filled all the English sees except two with Norman occupants; he even deposed Archbishop Stigand to make room for Lanfranc. His successors did the same for Wales, and the Welsh people understood that it was the act of the civil, not the ecclesiastical, governor. "The King," says the Welsh Chronicle, "made a person called Bernard, a Norman, bishop without the leave of or asking the Welsh scholars; by which the Bishop of St. Davids lost his privilege, which was taken by the Bishop of Canterbury."

In this matter Wales was treated no worse than England: the linguistic qualification was equally disregarded in both cases. In what way the Church of England, itself recently "denationalized," assisted in denationalizing the Church in Wales we are at a loss to discover. As far as we know, it was passive throughout the proceeding: the Archbishop of Canterbury accepted the *rôle* assigned to him by his Sovereign, and did no more. The union of the two Churches followed naturally on the union of the States. That Canterbury should be utilized for the purpose was perhaps partly due to the fact that there was no Archbishop in Wales, and probably never had been one in the sense which

we commonly attach to the term as implying *metropolitan jurisdiction*. It was, no doubt, applied to the Welsh bishops as a title of dignity, but not to any one of them as having authority over the others. This is conclusively shown to have been the case in the eighth century in connection with the adoption of the Roman Easter. Elfod, Bishop of Bangor, having adopted it, called upon the South Wales bishops to follow his example; but the Chronicle records that "the bishops of Llandaff and Menevia would not succumb to the Archbishop of Gwynedd (Bangor), being themselves Archbishops of older privilege." The absence of a metropolitan see in Wales reveals the fact that Wales had no national organized Church. Each of the four leading principalities had its own independent Church, and there was no common authority to bind them together for joint action. We have seen this in regard to the Easter question: no attempt seems to have been made to convene a council for the consideration of that knotty point; each diocese formed its own decision. The Welsh dioceses were thus in the same position as the English dioceses before they were welded together into a single Church by Archbishop Theodore—a measure which is held to have paved the way for the consolidation of the several independent States into the single

State of England. But nothing of this sort occurred in Wales: the principalities never coalesced, nor did their Churches. We cannot help thinking that the physical conformation of the country had something to do with this. Wales does not lend itself kindly to unification. Its two most important districts adjacent to its northern and southern coasts are separated from, rather than united to each other, by a central highland in which the geographical lines as marked by the rivers Severn, Wye, and Dee run east and west, towards England, instead of north and south. Hence there is no trunk-road between North Wales and South Wales: hence also Wales has *never had a capital*—a sign that it was not a single State, nor yet a single Church; for the very term "metropolitan" implies a metropolis of some kind or other, and there was none in Wales.

How far this special feature in the geography of Wales helps to account for the absence of a metropolitan, we must leave to the judgment of our readers. It is, however, noteworthy that the services of the Archbishop of Canterbury had been obtained for consecrations of bishops in South Wales during the century *preceding* the Norman Conquest; and as there could have been no claim of canonical jurisdiction at that time, it looks as if there had been a degree of

friendly approximation between the Welsh and English Churches, of which there are other indications, such as the adoption of the Roman Easter, and the employment of Welsh ecclesiastics (Asser and Tremerin) in England. It may, however, be thought on the other hand that the subsequent efforts of Giraldus Cambrensis to obtain the primacy for St. Davids, with himself as archbishop, was a recrudescence of the war which Mr. Asquith supposes to have been waged between the Churches of England and Wales. But whatever may have been the political significance imported into the matter by the Welsh princes, it was essentially an *ecclesiastical* question, as shown by the fact that Giraldus had been anticipated in his action by the Norman Bishop Bernard, who seems to have been as eager for the honour of his see as Giraldus himself; for the Welsh Chronicle describes him as "a man of extraordinary praise and piety, who died after extreme exertions upon sea and land towards procuring for the Church of Menevia its ancient liberty." Independence of Canterbury did not necessitate a denial of the Royal supremacy, otherwise it would hardly have been claimed by a Norman bishop, nor could Giraldus with any degree of consistency have pressed for it after having accompanied Archbishop Baldwin in his Welsh

tour and countenanced his assertion of metropolitan authority in the four cathedrals.

On this review of the leading circumstances connected with the incorporation of the Welsh Church into the Church of England, we leave it to our readers to decide whether Mr. Asquith was right in representing it as the result of a conflict between the two Churches, for the issue of which the Welsh Church must be held responsible at the present day. The dissolution of the ecclesiastical union, while the civil union is retained, seems an odd mode of rectifying the wrong committed some eight hundred years since. Whether the severance of the Church is regarded as merely an instalment of a more complete severance between England and Wales we are not aware.

III

THE ENGLISH EPISCOPATE

Welsh bishops in the first case appointed by Queen Elizabeth—Failure of the plan in Llandaff and St. Davids through the indigence of the sees—Their augmentation from English preferments with English bishops—Continuance of a Welsh episcopate in Bangor and St. Asaph through the augmentation of the sees from local sources—English bishops sent into these dioceses from the reign of Charles II.—Causes of the change—Translation of Welsh bishops to English sees—General laxity of the Georgian period—Assimilation to South Wales.

THE English episcopate of the post-Reformation period holds a prominent place among the hostile charges brought by Liberationists against the Church in Wales; it furnishes them with evidence (as they suppose) of *alienism*, and of hostility on the part of England to the language and nationality of Wales. Without for a moment wishing to deny or extenuate the misfortune which that episcopate proved to the Church in various ways, we may demur to the conclusions

drawn as to the causes and motives which led to its establishment, in as far as they can be discovered from the facts of the case; for there is no authoritative explanation why English-speaking bishops were sent into Wales; we can only judge of it from circumstantial evidence. We therefore propose to offer a slight sketch of the history of the episcopate from the time of the Reformation, commencing with the reign of Queen Elizabeth. She undoubtedly intended to establish a Welsh episcopate for the Church in Wales. But difficulties presented themselves on the score of the indigence of the sees. Llandaff held the first place in this respect, its income being only £80: on which account Archbishop Parker reported that "few that were honest and able would be persuaded to meddle with it."[1]

Nevertheless, efforts were made to supply it with Welsh bishops, and altogether we can reckon up seven such who held the see for an aggregate period of 45 years, though not continuously, Englishmen being interspersed. But subsequently to W. Lloyd, in 1679, no Welshman was appointed, the see still remaining lamentably poor, as stated by Bishop Beaw, the gross income being £230, and the net only sufficient "to find his household in vinegar, pepper, salt,

[1] Strype, *Life of Parker*, i. 404.

and fire." It was absolutely necessary that additional funds should be found; but the diocese possessed no available resources. Bishop Beaw reported—"I have but three livings in my gift, whereof two are so lean and ill-favoured, that should they be sent to the fair, no chapman would be found to bid for them. I have no deanery; and as for prebends, such as usually fall in my gift, they are such as he that should give five pounds for any one of them would bid too much by three." The only alternative was that the see should be subsidized from English preferments. For this purpose the deanery of Hereford was attached to it during the incumbencies of three bishops, Tylor, Clavering, and Harris (1706—1740); and at a subsequent period the deanery of St. Paul's for Bishops Van Mildert, Sumner, and Coplestone (1819—1849). Other bishops were allowed to retain what preferments they held at the time of their consecration—Gilbert, for instance, the deanery of Exeter and a canonry of Christchurch; Shipley, the deanery of Winchester; and the notorious Watson no less than nine livings in various parts of England. There can be no doubt that the English episcopate in this diocese was due to the impoverishment of the see.

The case was very much the same with St.

Davids, though that see was less denuded of funds than Llandaff. We find the third Welsh bishop, Middleton, complaining that he "could not even pay his debts to the Queen's Majesty or other persons, nor live in credit, nor govern his diocese."[1] Thenceforward Englishmen held the see, with hardly an exception, down to the accession of the late Bishop Basil Jones in 1874, retaining the preferments they held at the time of their appointment—Milbourne, for instance, the rectory of Sevenoaks; Laud, the rectory of Ibstock and a canonry of Westminster; Field, the rectories of Cotton and Mayfield; and so forth, terminating with Burgess, holding the richest canonry, and Jenkinson, the deanery of Durham. That the reason for this arrangement was well understood appears from the following remarks of Dr. Saunders in his *View of St. Davids*, p. 49, written in 1721:—"We are not always to impute it to their lordships' choice, but to their necessities, that they are so commonly obliged to make us thus unhappy" (viz. by their absence); "for since their bishopricks afford neither habitations for them to live in, nor just revenues for them to live upon, they may well be excused if they hold them with what rectories or dignities they have in other dioceses, though it should be wished that what *commendams* are

[1] Strype, *Life of Grindal*, p. 401.

allowed them were always in their own." The concluding remark would equally well apply to the appointment of Welsh instead of English bishops; for if the *commendams* were within the limits of the diocese, there would be no need of English bishops. This was the case with the two northern sees, Bangor and St. Asaph, which were originally as impoverished as they well could be, having incomes of £131 and £187 respectively, but which were subsidized, the former by the annexation of the archdeaconries of Bangor and Anglesey with four livings, and the latter by the annexation of the archdeaconry of St. Asaph and five sinecure rectories. By these accretions the incomes of the sees became adequate, and Welshmen held Bangor for about a century and a half, and St. Asaph for somewhat more than a century.

We have now to consider the question, What led to the cessation of the Welsh episcopate in North Wales? People have not unnaturally sought for some special cause of hostility on the part of England, such as might have been the case if Wales had exhibited strong Jacobite proclivities, or had objected to the accession of the Hanoverian dynasty. But no such cause can be found; there were, no doubt, numerous Jacobites in Wales as there were in England; but they did not commit any overt act of rebel-

lion, while as regards the Hanoverian dynasty the Welsh people seem on the whole to have been forward with their declarations of loyalty. The Society of Ancient Britons in London selected March 1, 1715, for its inauguration, not only in commemoration of St. David's festival, but also because it was the birthday of the Princess Caroline, and "to manifest the attachment of many influential Welshmen to the House of Hanover during the troubles which threatened the security of that dynasty." We also hear of an address signed by "200 persons of the best quality in the Principality," as having been presented to the King that same year. Nor indeed do the appointments of bishops accord with the date of the Jacobite outbreak; two Englishmen, Glemham and Barrow, were appointed to St. Asaph by Charles II., and three, Hooper, Beveridge, and Fleetwood, by Queen Anne; and the first appointment made by George I. was a Welshman, Wynne. Special significance has been attached to the appointment of Hoadley to Bangor in 1716, the more so as he never visited the place during the five years of his episcopate there. His non-residence has been attributed to the fear of personal violence; but there is not the slightest foundation for this idea; he was equally an absentee from the sees of Hereford and Salisbury which he afterwards held, and

possibly his unwillingness to move from London was due to bodily infirmity. His successor at Bangor, Reynolds, seems to have been well received, if we may judge from the tenor of his primary charge, which betrays no uneasiness.

While we cannot find any ground for suspecting *hostility* in the change that occurred at this period, we may draw attention to the increasing frequency of the translation of Welsh bishops as endangering the continuance of a Welsh episcopate; for it would be impossible to be continually filling up the vacancies caused by promotions to English sees. The last two Welsh bishops of Bangor were translated, Humphries in 1701 and Evans in 1715; so also William Lloyd of St. Asaph in 1692, and his namesake of Llandaff in 1679; Thomas of St. Davids in 1683, and Wynne of St. Asaph in 1727. There was thus a gradual process of *assimilation* between Wales and England, which was undoubtedly prejudicial to the spiritual interests of the former country, but not necessarily attributable to hostile feeling on the part of the latter. Considering the length of time that English bishops had held sway in South Wales, it may not have appeared a serious step to extend the same treatment to North Wales. A general laxity of religious principle prevailed throughout the Georgian period, and this

affected the appointment of bishops, who were henceforth selected by the Prime Minister instead of, as heretofore, by the Archbishop of Canterbury. Political qualifications outweighed ecclesiastical; and on such grounds Welshmen were at a disadvantage. It may be further added that a different standard of episcopal duties prevailed during the Georgian period to that to which we are accustomed. The pastoral office was very much in abeyance, and the main office of the bishop was considered to be to govern his diocese; hence special qualifications, such as concerned the Welsh tongue, were apt to be overlooked. It must not, however, be hence concluded that the bishops were themselves indifferent to the spiritual needs of the people, or that they considered themselves as "holding a brief" from the English Government for discouraging the use of the Welsh language. We know indeed very little of their doings, but what we do know does not support the idea of hostility to the language. We find, for instance, Bishop Bull urging the clergy of St. Davids to forward the circulation of the Welsh Common Prayer-book; Beveridge arranging with Nelson for a popular edition of the same, and distributing largely a Welsh translation of Nelson's tract on Confirmation; Fleetwood, of St. Asaph, complaining in 1710 of the conduct of those

clergy who gave an English sermon to favour one or two families in a parish where the rest of the population was Welsh; and Hoadley preaching the anniversary sermon before the Welsh Society in London in 1717. These bishops could not possibly have considered themselves pledged by their appointments to neglect or discourage the use of the Welsh language; yet this is constantly charged against them, and they are denounced as an English garrison in Wales. We can hardly think it possible that men of high character would have accepted the office of bishop on such a humiliating condition as that which is attributed to them.

The considerations adduced to account for the cessation of the Welsh episcopate in North Wales may not be convincing; but they may at all events induce persons interested in the subject to take within their purview South Wales as well as North Wales, with the effect possibly that it may tend to mitigate the appearance of harshness and hostility derived from the contemplation of North Wales alone. We cannot believe that the provision of funds for St. Davids and Llandaff was otherwise than kindly meant; nor should we form any other opinion of the translation of Welsh bishops, though we consider it fatal to a Welsh episcopate. We

are therefore not disposed to accept Mr. Asquith's description of Wales as "a place chosen to send English-speaking bishops," if by that he means, as we suppose, that England was actuated by mean and selfish motives in its conduct towards Wales. It may be so; but we think that a more favourable complexion may be placed upon it, and one which will exonerate the Church from the opprobrium which has been heaped upon it in connection with this phase of its history.

IV

NEPOTISM

Exaggeration on this subject—Mr. W. Jones, M.P., quoted—No truth in the accusation as regards St. Davids and Llandaff—Particulars of Bishop Luxmoore's nepotism—Other bishops of St. Asaph—Alleged extent of nepotism "to the ninth degree of consanguinity," and of English appointments to cathedral posts and parochial benefices.

THE conduct of some of the English bishops in showing undue favour to relatives in the disposal of their patronage has exposed them to just reprobation. But when their conduct is adduced as an argument for the disendowment of the Church in the present day, and for this purpose is exaggerated and misrepresented, we may protest against such a use of the incident, and demand at all events that the charge be brought within the bounds of strict fact.

As an instance of such unfair use of the argument we quote the following words from the speech of Mr. W. Jones, M.P. for Arfon, in

his address to the House of Commons, Feb. 4, 1902 :—"Nepotism was a glaring abuse in the Church. One bishop, named Luxmoore, gave appointments to other five Luxmoores, and these Luxmoores between them received over £25,000 out of a total income of £39,000 for the whole diocese. Such was the Church of the nation."

It will be observed that the speaker here attributes to the *whole* Church in Wales conduct similar to that of Bishop Luxmoore of St. Asaph. Nepotism was (he says) a glaring abuse "in the Church, the Church of the nation." We propose to test this by a review of the several dioceses, in so far as our information permits. Taking a period of 150 years—say from 1700 to 1850—we have been unable to discover any evidence of nepotism in the two southern dioceses, if by "nepotism" is meant either an excessive number of relatives promoted, or an excessive number of appointments heaped on individual relatives. St. Davids was singularly free of the taint; the family name of a bishop (and there were twenty of them) *never* appears on the roll of the parochial clergy, and only once (Moss) in the higher appointments; and we know of only two collateral relatives, namely, Archdeacon Stephens, nephew of Bishop Bull, and Brookes, brother-in-law of Bishop Smallbrooke, as holding parochial benefices. As

regards Llandaff, we have already had occasion to advert to the poverty of the see [1] in the matter of patronage, which would effectually have tied the bishops' hands, had they been disposed to indulge in nepotism. In the diocese of Bangor, as now constituted in point of area, no bishop's name appears in the roll of the parochial clergy; but in that portion which has been transferred to St. Asaph we meet with the names Majendie and Newcome, each of whom held two benefices; and in Bangor cathedral six posts were held by relatives. In St. Asaph there was, no doubt, flagrant nepotism, as manifested in the conduct of Bishop Luxmoore, of whose proceedings Mr. Jones has a somewhat hazy idea; for he talks of "five" relatives, whereas there were but four, and that these received £25,000 out of the £39,000 which made up the total income of the parochial clergy. The "fifth" member of the family was really the bishop himself, whose large income (about £12,000) was included in the £25,000, though it was in no sense the product of nepotism, nor was it taken out of the £39,000. The same may be said of the deanery, held by one of the four, and of the sums derived from the Hereford diocese; so that, in point of fact, a very small proportion of the £25,000 (about £2,500) came out

[1] Page 37.

of the £39,000. But these corrections would not mitigate the heinousness of Bishop Luxmoore's avarice and nepotism. It still remains true that he and his family accumulated an aggregate income of £25,000, more or less, from various quarters. Nor was he the only bishop of St. Asaph who exhibited an undue partiality for his relatives; we may mention Bishops Shipley, Bagot, Horsley, and Cleaver in this connection, though in a far less degree; and the only plea that we can offer in their exculpation is that the diocese offered special temptation in the existence of a number of sinecure rectories, to which no duties were attached, and in the large amount of patronage at the bishop's disposal.

But let the conduct of these bishops be as flagrant as any enemy of the Church may desire, how can this justify the assertion that the whole of Wales was infected with their failing? Or how can it be fair to make the Church of the present day responsible for the faults of past generations? The sinecure rectories have been abolished, and the Pluralities Acts forbid the accumulation of parochial benefices on individual incumbents. But in default of present-day abuses Liberationists find it necessary to fall back on those of former times, and to represent that what happened in one diocese and at one period happened in all the dioceses and at

all periods. It is only thus that the imagination has full play, so as to believe that the English bishops "brought in their sons, nephews, and cousins to the *ninth degree of consanguinity*,"[1] a curious commentary on the fact that not a single son can be found in St. Davids for 150 years. There may be more foundation for Mr. Asquith's assertion that Wales was "a place chosen to send canons, prebendaries, and rectors"; but we should very much like to have particulars as to persons and places, particularly in the case of parochial benefices, which may have required a knowledge of the Welsh language for the proper performance of the duties. Strangers to Wales may well assume a larger area for the Welsh language than really exists; and may consequently suppose that every monoglot Englishman is unsuited to Wales, and that such cases are very numerous. It may tend to correct this impression if we mention that Mr. Johnes, who exposed so severely the misdoings of the English bishops in the Luxmoore period, mentions only two cases of incumbents ignorant of Welsh throughout North Wales.[2] Other ecclesiastical posts, such as English-speaking canons and prebendaries, mentioned by Mr. Asquith, stand on a different footing as regards the language, inasmuch as their duties do not necessitate the use

[1] Johnes, *Essay*, p. 65. [2] *Ibid.* p. 221.

of the vernacular; but we doubt whether any serious number of such appointments took place, beyond the sphere of the relatives to whom we have already referred. If, however, the point is considered worthy of a place in deciding the question of the disendowment of the Church in Wales, is it unreasonable to suggest that full and fair inquiry should be made into the facts of the case? Even a superficial inspection of the names of the clergy would probably satisfy any fair-minded inquirer as to the gross exaggeration of the numbers.

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V

THE WELSH LANGUAGE

Bilingualism—Practical difficulty in Church services—The English-speakers mainly Church-people—Effect of bilingualism on the strength and popularity of the Church—Advantage taken by Liberationists to traduce the Church—Illustrations thereof:—(1) The accusation of neglect of the Welsh Press, (2) The delay in producing the Welsh Bible.

THAT the Welsh Church has had a special difficulty to contend with in the duplicate language is a matter of common knowledge; but it may be doubted whether the extent of the difficulty is sufficiently appreciated by those who live outside Wales. People may think of it as confined to the awkwardness of bilingual services in parishes where the two languages exist side by side, but where from want of funds or other causes it is impossible to provide separate buildings and clergymen for the languages. In such cases the practical inconveniences of the two languages make themselves

severely felt, constituting what is commonly known as the "bilingual *difficulty*."

This difficulty has pressed with unequal weight on the Church as compared with Nonconformity. The English-speaking element of the population has in past times been mainly attached to the Church, and it has been the bounden duty of the Church to do what it could for the supply of its spiritual needs. Nonconformity, on the other hand, has been monoglot Welsh, and has been at liberty to offer purely Welsh services to its people. We do not say that this is the present position of Nonconformity. It has begun to feel the pressure of the English language, and has become more or less bilingual. But this is a matter of recent growth; while the Church has had to contend with a condition that for generations has been sapping its strength through the natural preference which the Welshman feels for places of worship where he has a full supply of the ministrations which go to his heart.

It will thus be seen that the Church has been heavily handicapped by the linguistic condition of the country, and it can hardly be a matter of surprise that she has suffered from it in numbers and popularity. This would naturally be the case even if there had been nothing beyond the spontaneous influence of language at work. But

it is well known that other agencies are brought to bear upon the subject, and that no efforts are spared to bring the Church into disrepute with the people as a non-Welsh and non-national institution.

In illustration of this tendency we will refer to statements made by Mr. W. Jones in his speech on Welsh Disendowment (Feb. 4, 1902). The first of these is directed to show the absence of any Welsh Church publications. He said:— "There were 32 magazines and 25 newspapers published in the Welsh language. How many of these were in the hands of Church people? A Church magazine was started in January, it flickered in June, and was dead before Christmas" — whereat the audience cheered and laughed: it was a good joke against the Church. But did not Mr. W. Jones know that the Church maintains four periodicals, namely, the *Haul*, *Llan*, *Cyfaill*, and *Perl*, three of which are of old standing? If so, how was he justified in implying that the Church had utterly failed to support a single one? How far the 57 publications to which he referred were of sectarian character we are unable to judge; but if Mr. W. Jones had wished to put the contrast fairly, he might have informed the House that the multiplicity of Nonconformist publications is due to the multiplicity of Nonconformist sects, each of

which requires to have its own publications. The Welsh Church press is confessedly weak, but this forms no excuse for so gross a misrepresentation of its efforts.

The other statement is directed to deprive the Church of what credit it is entitled to in connection with the production of the Welsh Bible. Having premised that there was a lack of sympathy between the Church and the people, he adduces the following evidence of his assertion:—"It was to a layman that the Welsh owed the translation of the Bible, although it was claimed that the bishops of the Church gave it. But on their own confession, in the dedication to Elizabeth, they gave it only after 26 years of sloth." This statement is extremely inexact. A layman, Salesbury, did indeed translate the greater part of the New Testament, but he did so at the request (as he says) of "our most vigilant pastors, the Bishops of Wales"; a bishop, R. Davies, translated five of the Epistles, and a clergyman the Book of Revelation. But the Old Testament was not published until after a considerable delay, and then not by the layman, but by a clergyman, W. Morgan, with the assistance of the Bishops of St. Asaph and Bangor. The reasons of the delay are perfectly well known, and should have been explained by Mr. Jones before he attributed it to "sloth."

Yet, after all, the production of the Welsh version occupied very little more time than that of the *revision* of the English Bible a few years since, with all the immense advantages which the revisers enjoyed as compared with the Welsh translators. It should be stated that Queen Elizabeth had ordered the bishops to produce the publication, but had provided no funds for the purpose; and it was quite impossible for them to meet the heavy charges of printing out of their slender incomes.

Whether the translation of the Welsh Bible in the reign of Queen Elizabeth is a suitable subject for discussion in connection with Disestablishment at the present time is a point for the decision of Parliament. But if the subject is raised, the circumstances should be fully and fairly stated: and we question whether this has been done in the present instance. Whatever may have been the delay in performing the work, and whatever the causes of the delay, the broad fact remains that to the Church is due the credit of having given the Welsh Bible to the Welsh people.

VI

ALIENISM

Prominence of the charge of alienism in Liberationist attacks on the Church—Use made of the title "Church of England" for this purpose—The imputation retorted on the Nonconformist sects in Wales—The extension of the name "Church of England" over Wales probably a gradual process in the absence of any previous name.

THE charge of *alienism* holds a foremost place in the attacks on the Church in Wales. It addresses itself to the feeling of patriotism which burns so strongly in a Welshman's breast. It is also vague, and imperfectly understood by those who use it; but it is understood to be a term of reproach, and consequently serves as a convenient nickname—a stone ever at hand to cast at the Church in the absence of more solid accusations.

We have had occasion to refer to alienism by name, and still oftener by implication, in the preceding pages. For it constitutes the sting

in most of the charges which we have noticed as brought against the Church. There remains, however, one which has not hitherto been mentioned, viz. the title "Church of England." The importance of this in the eyes of Liberationists is shown by the fact that they have adopted a new form, in which the name "England" is brought more prominently forward, styling it "The Church of *England* in Wales," in lieu of the ordinary "Church in Wales"; so conveying the idea that the Church owed its origin to the present Church in England, and ignoring the fact that it existed here several centuries before the Church of England or even the name of England had been born; so also conveniently recalling, as the late Mr. H. Richard, M.P., remarked, "traditions of repugnance and hatred from the past when England was the deadly enemy of Welsh freedom and independence."

In this charge Nonconformists might well look to themselves. What shall we say of the names Methodist, Baptist, Congregational, and Wesleyan, whether in their English or Welsh forms, but that they were borrowed from England, and betray the English origin of the sects which they represent, and with which, with a single exception, they maintain close relations at the present day? The exception to which we refer is the Calvinistic Methodists,

who have no corporate union with any kindred body in England, and this for the simple reason that they were followers of Whitfield and not of Wesley, and that the former left no organized sect behind him ; this, however, does not divest them of the fact that their name, as their origin, was from England. No difficulties seem to be experienced by Nonconformists in maintaining inter-communion with their English brethren. Offa's Dyke is in this respect only a geographical expression. And it is hardly necessary to remark that in commercial and social life no barrier exists: Welshmen and Englishmen associate freely without the slightest idea that they are alien to each other. It is only in religious warfare that an artificial barrier of this kind is set up by Liberationists to the prejudice of the Church.

If it be thought a harsh and hostile measure to have extended the title "Church of England" over Wales at the time of the Norman Conquest, we suggest two circumstances which may have tended to modify that impression to the minds of those who were contemporary with the event, the first being the absence of any existing name, and the second the gradual character of the process by which the unification of the Churches was effected. We have already said that the Welsh Church had no collective or official name

as a whole. Its several dioceses may have been named after their sees. The way thus lay open for the diffusion of the name "Church of England." And this may have been a gradual process; for the dioceses were brought into union separately, by the exercise of an act of authority, such as consecration, accompanied by a profession of obedience. This happened at the consecration of Urban, a Welshman, to Llandaff, in 1107; Bernard, a Norman, to St. Davids, in 1115; David, a Welshman, to Bangor, in 1120; and Gilbert, to St. Asaph, in 1143. Hervéus, a Breton, had been intruded into Bangor in 1092, but there is no evidence that he professed obedience. Now, as the subjection of Wales is supposed to date from 1081 with the visit of the Conqueror to St. Davids, there was ample time for the gradual diffusion of the name "Church of England" over Wales in the absence of any pre-existing title. We put these considerations forward for what they may be worth, and as matters of historical interest. To throw the odium of the Norman Conquest on the Church of the present day is a mean device, not worthy of refutation. Whatever blame may attach to that event must be shared by the ancestors of Nonconformists.

VII

EDUCATIONAL WORK

Brief review of the history of education—Circulating schools—National schools in the early part of the last century—Nonconformist and British schools at that period—National schools at end of that century—Board schools—Increased cost of schools between 1870 and 1902—Violent attack on the Church in reference to the Education Act of 1902.

A BRIEF notice of the educational work of the Church in Wales may not be out of place at the present juncture. We need go no further back than the beginning of the last century. The Circulating schools set on foot by the Rev. Griffith Jones, of Llanddowror, in 1730 had been in abeyance between 1779 and 1809; but the good work they had done is attested by the following extract from a letter written by the Rev. T. Charles in 1811:—

"The Circulating Day-schools have been the principal means of erecting Sunday-schools; for without the former the state of the country was such that we could not obtain teachers to carry on the latter; besides, Sunday-schools were set up in every place where the Day-schools had been."

But the Circulating schools were obviously insufficient to supply a basis for a scheme of national education; and so they were in the first place supplemented, and finally superseded by a more efficient system of permanent buildings and better-trained masters. The inauguration of this improved method dates from the foundation of the National Society in 1811. The Welsh Church was not behindhand in availing itself of its new opportunities. In North Wales it had established 106 schools before 1827, and 279 with 18,732 scholars before 1847. The Nonconformist sects meanwhile had at that date established only 13 schools with 755 scholars; and there were 42 British schools, the earliest dating from 1838, with 4,979 scholars. In South Wales the Church had established 312 schools before 1847 with 16,868 scholars, as compared with 22 British and 91 Nonconformist schools, with a joint attendance of 6,548 scholars. Thus in the twelve counties the Church had about the middle of last century 581 schools with 35,600 scholars, while the two other classes had 169 schools with 12,282 scholars. Undoubtedly the Church took the lead.

Coming down to recent times we find that in the thirteen counties (Monmouthshire included) the Church had 677 schools in 1902 with 91,506 scholars in the four Welsh dioceses. It would

be futile to institute a comparison with the two other classes, inasmuch as the establishment of Board schools in 1870 had relieved Nonconformists of the necessity of building new schools, or even of maintaining old ones. They were satisfied with the constitution and religious teaching of those schools, and did not care to multiply denominational schools of their own.

Board schools were established for the purpose of supplementing and not superseding the Voluntary schools, which had done such admirable service to the cause of national education. But the permission accorded to the former to draw freely from the parochial rates has proved fatal to the maintenance of the latter. We express no opinion as to whether this result has been foreseen and designed by the managers of those schools; but the fact remains that the expenditure has advanced in them from an average of £1 5*s.* 5*d.* per scholar in 1870 to £2 15*s.* 9*d.* in 1902 for Wales, and £3 0*s.* 9*d.* for England and Wales together. The Voluntary schools, depending on private contributions as the equivalent of rates, were, of course, compelled to follow in their wake, but at an ever-increasing interval, and finally succumbed to the "intolerable strain" when the cost per scholar had reached £2 6*s.* 9*d.* Yet though so far below the Board schools in expenditure, they appear to have been on a level

with them in efficiency, the difference in the annual grants earned being on the average only three-farthings in favour of the Board schools.

The Church, having been relieved of the cost of secular instruction by the Education Act of 1902, has been permitted to retain her definite religious instruction in consideration of giving the use of the school-rooms to the County Councils. But Liberationists see in this an opportunity for attacking the Church along the whole line. Religious instruction is the nominal bone of contention ; but it is perfectly clear that this is only the pretext : the real objects are Disestablishment and Home Rule. The movement is essentially political ; and this accounts for the virulence with which the educational question is discussed : there is no wish for a settlement except on the terms of a surrender ; no wish for compromise or agreement, because that might bring the dispute to a close, whereas what its leaders desire is to keep the sore open, and to enlarge and irritate it by bringing in all kinds of side issues.

Demands and assertions take the place of arguments. Conscience—the conscience of the individual, uninstructed as it may be—the Nonconformist conscience which practically ignores the existence of a Church conscience—this one-sided conscience is made the absolute arbiter

of the whole question, setting itself above law; and in obedience to this it is sought to prohibit Churchmen from instructing their own children in their own schools. It seems strange that Wales—Bible-loving Wales—should take the lead in this anti-religious crusade; but perhaps this is the natural result of sectarianism, leading in the first place to undenominationalism as a necessity whenever differing sects combine for joint action; and ultimately to secularism. We have seen this last stage reached already in more than fifty of the Board schools in Wales; and it was the deliberate wish of the late Mr. H. Richard, M.P., that the Intermediate schools should be established on this basis, as may be seen in a memorandum appended to the Report of the Committee on Higher Education in 1881. It is an alarming sign of the times. Churchmen may look back with some degree of satisfaction on their past efforts to lead their fellow-countrymen in a better way. It has been the main purport of this Note to show what they have done in the past. May it please God to enable them to carry on the good work in the future, that so His blessing may descend on our land, and it may continue to be, what it has been in the past, "a praise in the earth."

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